For my own part, nothing would sooner awaken my suspicion against a tradesman than to find he gave persons in my employment either beer or money gifts; and sure I am that these douceurs, like charity, cover a multitude of sins of the donor's. I give you my name, and with it a promise to hand, through you, 20*l.* to some hospital or benevolent society connected with the building trade, upon such an effort being made by the building trades generally as shall warrant my discontinuance of this hateful abuse; or should a meeting be called upon the subject, I will at once, through you, subscribe 5*l.* towards necessary expenses, such as printing, &c. I believe there is not a single person in the building-material trade that would not heartily rejoice at the discontinuance of the custom, and that the respectable portion of our working people have no desire for its continuance.

A LOVER OF A CHEERFUL CHRISTMAS.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

Woolpit, Suffolk.—It may be in the recollection of some of our readers, that the tower of this church was almost entirely demolished by lightning on the 16th July last. Through the praiseworthy efforts of the rector, the Rev. L. F. Page, sufficient funds have now been raised to rebuild it on a much more extensive scale. The new tower and spire—which is to be erected in the same style as the old one, viz. the Decorated, and of which period a greater portion of the church is,—will be nearly 140 feet high, whilst the former was barely 110 feet. It is to be built in rubble-work, with Bath-stone dressings.

Halsted.—A new town-hall has been erected here at a cost of about 2,000*l.* affording accommodation for a Corn Exchange on the ground floor 78 feet by 33 feet; on the upper floor in front an apartment 26 feet by 20 feet used for the Mechanics' Institution, with a committee-room adjoining; and behind these an assembly-room, 60 feet by 33 feet and 22 feet high. The designs for the building were furnished by Mr. E. Horner, and the building contract carried out by Mr. Sudbury.

Watchford.—On Tuesday in last week the parish church was re-opened for Divine service, after having been partially rebuilt, re-roofed, and wholly reseated. The walls and roof have been put into thorough order, and the accommodation greatly increased by the uniform introduction of open seats throughout the whole area. The restoration was carried out by Mr. Freeman, of Ely.

Mansfield.—It has been finally resolved to erect public baths at Mansfield, and the approval of the Home Secretary of State has been obtained, conformably to the Act of Parliament.

Swindon.—The recent catastrophe at Holmfirth, says a Wilts paper, has created some apprehension that a similar disaster may be feared in this neighbourhood. About a mile and a half from the town, on the Marlborough-road, is a large reservoir used as a feeder to the Wilts and Berks Canal. This covers a space of about 75 acres, and is at present much swollen by the heavy rains. Fears are therefore entertained that some portion of the embankment at the north end may give way. Should the embankment be forced, the most disastrous consequences would result to the neighbourhood, and especially to the little hamlet of Coate, which is situate not more than 100 or 150 yards from the spot.

Reading.—The closing of various churchyards in this town is recommended in a report to the General Board of Health by Mr. Lee, superintending inspector. Vaults and brick graves are excepted, as not yet filled up. There is already a cemetery here, which is reported sufficient as a substitute for the graveyards to be closed.

Kidderminster.—It has been resolved to erect public rooms here so soon as a sufficient sum has been collected. At a preliminary meeting lately held 1,100*l.* were collected on the spot.

Plymouth.—A house in course of erection, forming one of a range of buildings running parallel with the South Devon Railway terminus at Millbay, suddenly fell on Saturday week, carrying with it four men who were on the scaffolding of the building. The house was not covered in, and the constant rains had full play on the walls, and are said to have occasioned their fall.——On Monday week, the roof of an old mine adit under the Plymouth Leat, near Sheepstor-bridge, fell in, and diverted the stream into the river. The chasm caused by this accident is about 25 feet square, and 20 feet in depth, there being nearly 500 tons of ground washed away. Under the direction of the engineer, Mr. Bampton, operations were commenced as soon as possible to form a new channel for the water; pending which operations the inhabitants of Plymouth have been supplied with water from the Devonport Leat.

Devonport.—The new dock in Devonport yard is now complete within the entrance, and the gates, to be iron, are to be received from the contractors shortly, so that in the course of a few months there will be some accommodation at Devonport for ships of the largest class.

Cardiff.—The late heavy floods, according to the local *Guardian*, have carried away a portion of the original framework of Cardiff bridge, and a great deal of the work lately put up to protect the abutments. It is said by practical men, that unless a weir be erected below the bridge, it will not long resist the action of land floods.

Chester.—The following scraps are gleaned from the *Chester Chronicle*:—The Watch Lighting Committee have directed that Curzon Park be lighted with gas. The lamps will be erected immediately.——A sepulchral memorial has of late been placed in Chester Cemetery, consisting of a series of stone slabs resting upon four pillars, which enclose a marble tablet, whereon a suitable inscription will be engraved.——The proprietors of the Grand Stand have commenced alterations in that building. It is their intention to make square the south end of the stand, filling up what has hitherto been an open space. This will afford accommodation for from 300 to 400 individuals, and add another room to the structure. ——A contract has been entered into with Mr. Hughes, builder, Aldford, for the total repair and restoration of the Exchange. Scaffoldings have been erected against the south front, where the repairs will be commenced. The ornamental panels at the north and south ends are to be restored in Bath or Caen stone, wrought or sculptured, and the statue of Queen Anne is to be restored, painted, and regilt.

Leigh.—Contracts for the erection of a new church have been let, and the first stone will shortly be laid. The church is to be built of Yorkshire stone. A tower will be erected at the west end, the principal entrance being at the south end. The edifice is to be called "Christ's Church."

Manchester.—Notice has been given of an intention to apply to Parliament for the purchase of additional property for improvement purposes; further powers for sewering and draining dwelling-houses; for regulating cellar dwellings; for preventing the slaughtering of cattle; and for regulating interments. Power is sought to form a new street from Hyde's-cross to Ducie-bridge; a new street from the junction of Portland-street with David-street, to Oxford-street, opposite Chepstow-street; to widen Mill-street, and to form a street to commence at the south-west end of Mill-street, and terminate in Oxford-street, near Esdaile's-buildings, all in the Manchester township: also to widen Brunswick-street from Oxford-street to Upper Brook-street, and to make a new street to commence opposite the north-east end of Brunswick-street, in Upper Brook-street, and to terminate at the junction of Hyde-road with the Stockport-road, in the township of Chorlton-upon-Medlock and borough of Manchester.

Burnley.—A waterworks company has been formed at Padiham; capital, 5,000*l.* to be raised in 500 shares of 10*l.* each. Mr. Humphrey Waddington, is the company's engineer.

Swinton.—The foundation stone of the Swinton National Schools was laid on 22nd ult. by Earl Fitzwilliam, who granted a site and 100*l.* The necessity of erecting a new school arose from the insufficiency of the present school accommodation, and from the rapid increase of the already large population, in consequence of the railways, collieries, potteries, ironworks, and glassworks of the parish. The designs are by Mr. Blackmore, architect. The expense will be about 1,000*l.*, 100*l.* of which remains to be collected.

Southport.—It has been resolved to "obtain a survey of the town by a competent engineer, shewing the different levels, and the situations of the existing sewerage and gas-pipes," with the view of carrying out a system of sewerage for the town. The committee, however, empowered to obtain the survey, are restricted to an expenditure of 50*l.* for that purpose.

Wigan.—At a public meeting here it was lately resolved to request the town council to inquire as to the probable cost of a new market-house and town-hall, and to report to the ratepayers preparatory to an application to Parliament for an Act to build. The meeting subscribed 661*l.* towards expenses.

Grimsby.—The dome of the lantern of Grimsby lighthouse has just left the foundry, Hull. It is in the form of an ornamental cap, about six feet high, and three feet wide at the base, where the form is octagonal, but which changes into a series of semi-globes, and terminates with a ball at the summit. It is entirely of copper—in one piece (but cast at several times), and although little more than half an inch in thickness, contains nearly a ton of metal. It forms also the head of an improved lightning conductor, recently patented by Mr. Samuel Brown, of Sheffield. The lighthouse is 105 yards high.

Shields.—A graving dock, formed at the Limekiln-shore, North Shields, was opened last week. The extreme length of the new dock, for two vessels, is 292 feet; that on the wet side, for the accommodation of one vessel, 120 feet. There were 15 feet of water in the dock. In ordinary springs there will be from 17 to 18 feet.

Sunderland.—St. Paul's Church, Bishopwearmouth, was consecrated on Monday week.

Edinburgh.—At a recent meeting of the City council, some conversation took place with reference to charges made upon visitors to Holyrood Palace. Dr. Sibbald characterised it as a most discreditable state of affairs for parties to be making 800*l.* and 1,000*l.* a-year by the exhibition of the palace, when the clergy of the Canongate were working at potters' wages. The Lord Provost said the only way to put down the evil was by the regular sale of tickets, the proceeds of which might subsequently be divided among those interested, as was now done at the Glasgow Cathedral. He added, that when the Duchess of Kent was lately in Edinburgh, she paid a sovereign to be allowed to inspect her daughter's palace. The Lord Provost's Committee are now in correspondence with the Treasury, and with Lord John Manners on the subject.——At a recent county meeting of justices of peace, it was reported that the model of the Melville statue is in progress, and that in a week or two it will be put into plaster of Paris preparatory to being cast in bronze: before casting, however, Mr. Steell is to submit the model to the inspection of the committee for their approval.

Dingwall.—The *John O'Groat Journal* states that a block of stone computed to weigh 30 tons was lately separated at the Dingwall quarry by a single pound of gunpowder.

Ventnor (Isle of Wight).—The New Independent Chapel, which is to be a Gothic structure, from designs furnished by Mr. Raffles Brown, of Liverpool, was tendered for on Monday in last week, when the following estimates were received:—

Mr. H. Ingram	£2,196	0	0
Mr. B. Ball	2,135	0	0
Mr. H. Hendy (Portsmouth)	2,119	0	6
Mr. J. Newnham	2,110	0	0
Mr. J. Spary	1,914	10	0
Messrs. R. Bearis and Sons	1,840	0	0
Mr. J. Cumming	1,830	0	0
Mr. Yates (Liverpool)	1,478	0	0

The quantities were supplied to each contractor!

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